



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer-
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

At its meeting held December 5, 2006, the Board took the following action:

83-B

Supervisor Molina made the following statement:

“On November 20, 2006, staff with the AIDS Clinical Trial Group (ACTG) at LAC+USC Medical Center received a telephone call from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) informing them that their Clinical Trial Unit (CTU, #1201) at the Rand Schrader Clinic (5P21) would be phased out in 2007 and that December 31, 2006 would be the last day of their budget for the current grant cycle. In less than 24 hours, computer randomization screens were closed by the NIH without written notification or justification. Several screened participants who had already consented to receive study therapies arrived that day only to learn that they would not receive the treatments listed in their informed consent and that the NIH would no longer fund studies at the LAC+USC site.

“Since 1986, when USC was awarded a grant from NIH as one of the 12 original AIDS Clinical Trial Groups to conduct studies to evaluate new therapies for HIV/AIDS opportunistic infections, this Clinical Trial Unit (CTU #1201) has consistently remained one of the top performing units in the United States, even as the original 12 CTUs expanded to more than 30 across the nation. The studies from this unit have resulted in therapies that are currently the basis of the U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines. More recently, the ACTG Site Evaluation Report noted that the CTU at LAC+USC had the highest number of enrollees in the nation, has enrolled more Latinos and Latinas than any other site in the continental United States (more than 90% of its research subjects), is second in the number of women enrolled, and leads the nation in enrolling the indigent, uninsured, homeless and other underserved populations.

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“The loss of ACTG funding at LAC+USC will also dramatically affect the services offered at the Rand Schrader Clinic (5P21) which serves approximately 3,000 unique HIV positive patients (60%-70% Latinos) in approximately 50,000 visits annually.

“The NIH’s actions and decisions regarding the AIDS Clinical Trial Group at LAC+USC is greatly alarming. This loss of funds coupled with ongoing reductions from the Ryan White CARE Act, the Centers for Disease Control and other sources will have a ripple effect throughout the County’s entire HIV/AIDS service and care delivery system.

“Since Congress will soon be out of session, it is essential that this Board act immediately to seek reinstatement of this crucial funding.”

Dr. Bruce Chernof, Director of Health Services, responded to questions by the Board.

Al Ballesteros, Holly Boyd, Nora Gonzalez, Miki Jackson, Elliot Johnson, Brad Land and Michael D. Sage addressed the Board.

After discussion, on motion of Supervisor Molina, seconded by Supervisor Yaroslavsky, unanimously carried, the Board took the following actions:

1. Made a finding pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(b)(2), that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the Board subsequent to the agenda being posted as specified in subdivision (a);
2. Made a finding that the Board received notice of defunding subsequent to the posting of the agenda and that any action to seek reinstatement of funding must occur immediately, prior to the close of the current session of Congress;
3. Directed the Executive Officer of the Board to immediately send a five-signature letter to Dr. Anthony W. Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, expressing extreme concern regarding the impact of this funding loss and requesting immediate reinstatement of funding, with copies to the Governor and the County’s Legislative and Congressional Delegations;

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4. Instructed the County's Legislative Advocates in Washington, D.C. to immediately and aggressively pursue remedies with the appropriate Congressional members and responsible U.S. Department of Health and Human Services entities; and
5. Directed the Director of Public Health's Office AIDS Program and Policy, and the Los Angeles County Commission on HIV to examine the disturbing trend in reduction of Federal HIV/AIDS funding to Los Angeles, and report back on program impacts and recommendations within 45 days.

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Copies distributed:

- Each Supervisor
- Chief Administrative Officer
- County Counsel
- Director of Health Services
- Director of Office of AIDS Program and Policy
- Executive Director, Commission on HIV

Letter sent to:

- Dr. Anthony W. Fauci, Director
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

Copies sent to:

- The Governor
- Each Member, Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
- Each Member, Los Angeles Congressional Delegation